FUTURE PROOFING CITY STUDIES

The Future Proofing City Studies (FPCS) document our work in nine cities in four African countries - Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique and Uganda. Each country represents a different typology of national urban development.

Using two innovative tools to a) analyse cities’ institutional and physical capacity and b) the environmental risks in each city, our work aims to help cities better understand the specific challenges and opportunities they face.

These city studies will help practitioners in local municipalities, national administrations and international organisations realise their potential as centres of growth and job creation.

Urbanisation in Africa

Africa is going through large scale economic growth and cities are taking centre-stage in this dramatic change. Many African countries are continuing to experience urbanisation rates of 5 percent or more and economic growth of over 10 percent per year. This is changing the face of African cities and testing the capacity of city governments as the demand for basic urban services is dramatically increasing.

While there are significant opportunities around trade and industry, cities face environmental risks often related to climate change threats, natural resource scarcity, and underlying geophysical hazards. To be successful cities need to adopt integrated and holistic urban planning policies and plan for growth that pursues low carbon development pathways and is future-proofed to environmental risk.
Analytical tools

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Normative Framework describes the physical and institutional environment which can support cities to achieve inclusive economic growth, to manage demographic change and to future-proof against environmental risks.

The Framework is a tool to assess the physical and institutional enabling environment within African cities, and provides an evidence base for future planning, investment and decision-making.

URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FRAMEWORK

The Environmental Risk Framework aims to help cities understand and address the critical environmental challenges which shape urban wellbeing. It identifies three dimensions of environmental risk: climatic, biological and natural resource and geophysical hazards.

A current and future risk rating is provided through an understanding of existing threats at three scales: local, regional and global.

Key findings

Rapid economic growth alongside fast-paced urbanisation and unregulated urban growth, often in relatively ‘young’ cities is happening across the cities. Urbanisation is viewed as a key driver for development although governments are addressing this through different urban growth models and decentralisation:

- Most cities are experiencing significant basic service provision challenges;
- Cities are expanding with unclear municipal boundaries and large migration, making municipal revenue collection difficult; and
- Cities struggle with environmental challenges - exacerbated by trade-offs in economic growth.

LESSONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING

- Rethink municipal boundaries and cross-boundary collaboration;
- Harness the informal economy and large youth population through economic development aligned with labour strategies;
- Consider regional connections and role within national plans, as well as infrastructure provision in hinterlands;
- Emerging models of public private partnership are helping to fill infrastructure gaps, but their drawbacks need to be considered;
- Strategic assets should be harnessed in the context of an inclusive economy and natural resource limits; and
- Future development plans need to consider climate change scenarios and low carbon development pathways.

READ THE FUTURE PROOFING CITY STUDIES AT WWW.CITIESALLIANCE.ORG/ FUTURECITIESAFRICA AND WWW.ARUP.COM/FCA